

**WASHINGTON, Monday, July 10** — U.S. Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL) applauded the Federal Trade Commission's decision today to file suit against an e-commerce company that is trying to sell personal data about its customers after promising "never" to share such information.

Bachus contacted the FTC two weeks ago urging the agency to take action against Toysmart.com after the company offered to sell its customer database around the same time it filed for bankruptcy. Bachus also has introduced legislation to make it illegal for companies to sell private information about their customers after previously pledging to safeguard such data.

"Companies that promise customers they won't share their sensitive, private information and then turn around and attempt to sell it are engaging in false business practices and deception. The FTC should come down on them like a ton of bricks," said Bachus.

Toysmart.com has advertised its customer list and database for sale, even though the company's privacy policy (found on its web site, [www.toysmart.com](http://www.toysmart.com)) explicitly states: "Personal information voluntarily submitted by visitors to our site, such as name, address, billing information and shopping preferences, *is never shared* (emphasis added) with a third party."

"Your information is safe with us!" the Toysmart web site promises.

"It's shocking they would give such strong assurances and then so quickly disregard them," said Bachus. "Putting a customer's privacy up for sale – after specifically pledging not to do so – is sleazy and unethical and it ought to be illegal. I intend to make it so."

The FTC voted unanimously today to seek a preliminary injunction in federal court against Toysmart.com to prevent the web retailer from selling private information of thousands of customers who used the site before the company stopped taking orders last month. That information includes customers' names, addresses and buying habits.